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J. P. RITTER, JR
SOFT-SIDED LUGGAGE CASES

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FIG. 1.

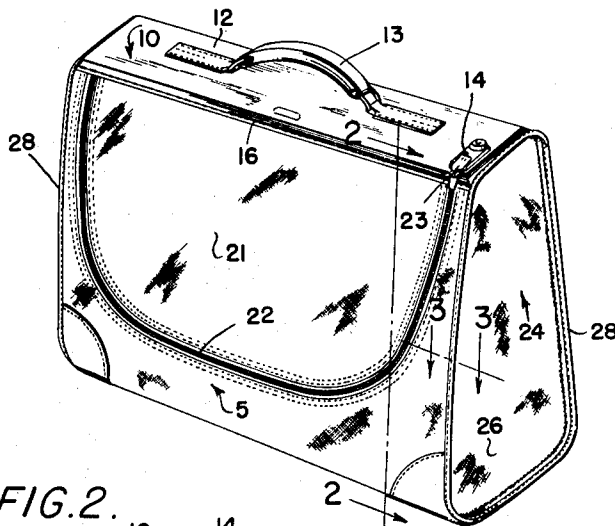


FIG. 2.

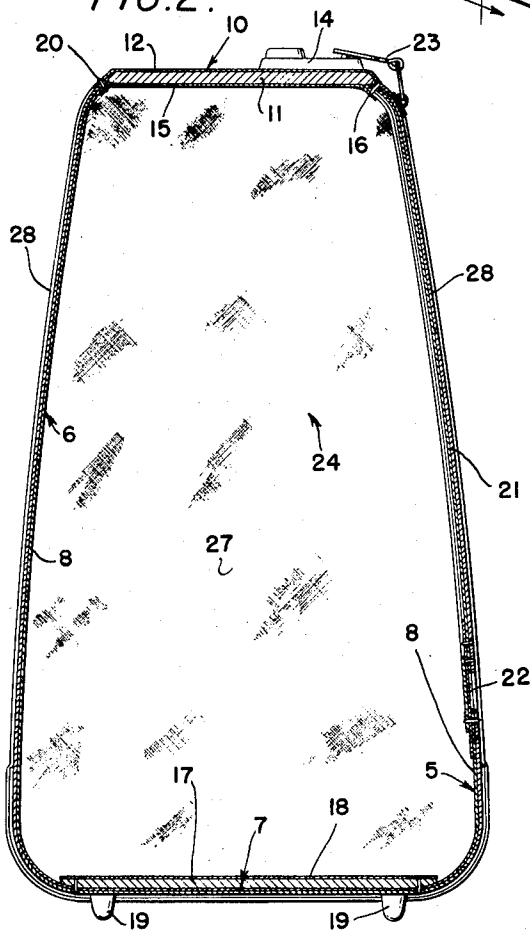
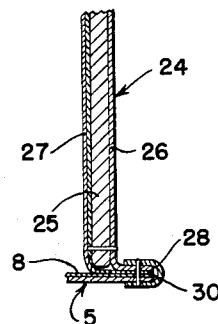


FIG. 3.



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SOFT-SIDED LUGGAGE CASES

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3 Claims. (Cl. 190—41)

This invention relates to improvements in soft-sided luggage cases, and more particularly to a soft-sided luggage case having reinforced or rigid end walls.

Soft-sided luggage cases and travelling bags are popular but it has heretofore been difficult to provide a satisfactory type of soft-sided luggage case which would retain its form when in an unpacked or semi-packed condition and which will not be undesirably squashed and distorted when subjected to rough handling and during transportation.

With the above in mind, it is a general object of the present invention to provide a soft-sided luggage case having strongly reinforced rigid ends surrounded by leather strips or welts in which are secured the edge portions of the wall and panel fabric coverings and linings, the leather reinforcing strips or welts forming cushions to absorb bumps and blows to which the ends of the travelling bag might be subjected, without imposing strain on the edges of the end reinforcements, and furthermore providing a common means for binding together various edges of the luggage case walls.

A further object of the invention is to provide a reinforced soft-sided luggage case wherein access to the interior of the case is provided by a deflectable flap in one of the soft or flexible sides of the luggage case, which flap is controlled by a hookless fastener which is secured in its flap closing condition by a lock on the top wall of the luggage case, the construction eliminating double locks, hinges and other items of hardware, resulting in a simple but durable form of travelling bag.

A further object of the invention is to provide a soft-sided luggage case formed of a sheet of flexible material arranged in sling formation with the opposite end edges being secured to a top ply member and the ends being closed by end reinforcing panels joined to the end edges of the side forming material by reinforcing strips or welts.

A further object of the invention is to provide a luggage case of the character described in which the front and rear sides are soft, and in which the end walls are reinforced or stiffened by panels with surrounding cushioning welts to relieve the walls from direct bumps, strains and stresses, one of the sides being provided with a flap controlled access opening.

A further object of the invention is to provide a reinforced soft-sided luggage case which is unique and attractive in appearance, which is simple and light in construction, which is strong and durable, and which is well adapted for the purposes described.

With the above and other objects in view, the invention consists of the improved reinforced soft-sided luggage case, and its parts and combinations as set forth in the claims, and all equivalents thereof.

In the accompanying drawing in which the same reference characters indicate the same parts in all of the views:

Fig. 1 is a front and end perspective view of the improved reinforced soft-sided luggage case;

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Fig. 2 is an enlarged vertical sectional view taken approximately on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1; and

Fig. 3 is an enlarged fragmentary detail sectional view taken on line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

The improved reinforced soft-sided luggage case is shown in its closed condition in Fig. 1 of the drawing, and it is to be observed that the front and rear sides 5 and 6 thereof, as well as the bottom 7, are externally formed from a single integral sheet of any desired flexible fabric covering material such as canvas, plastic, leather or the like. Prior to being assembled, the integral sheet which forms the front and rear walls 5 and 6 and the bottom 7 has lining fabric sheet 8 stitched to the inner surface. The top 10 is preformed and includes a rigid veneer panel 11 covered externally with a sheet 12 of leather, plastic or other finishing material, and the preformed top also has secured thereto a carrying handle 13 and a lock 14.

The undersurface of the preformed top carries a sheet of lining fabric 15. The preformed top 10, as thus formed, is stitched along one edge, as at 16, to the side and bottom forming sheet. While the aforesaid sheet is still in its flat condition, a bottom reinforcing veneer panel 17 is stitched into place intermediate the ends of the wall forming sheet and then has a lining fabric sheet 18 glued or otherwise secured to the exposed surface of the panel 17. Projecting exteriorly of the bottom are cleats 19.

The next step is to arrange the sheet which now includes the top 10, the front wall 5, the bottom 7, the rear wall 6, in sling formation, sewing the free upper edge of the rear wall fabric 6 to the other edge of the top 10, as at 20.

It is furthermore to be observed that the front wall 5 extending from the forward margin of the top 10 downwardly, is provided with a U-shaped opening adapted to be closed by a lined cover flap 21 which is releasably held in closed position by a U-shaped line of hookless fasteners 22 having a tab element 23 which, in the closed condition of the hookless fasteners, may be secured by the lock 14 on an end of the top 10. In this semi-finished condition of the luggage case the ends are open but are adapted to have mounted therein preformed ends 24 which include rigid veneer panels 25, of a shape to conform to and close the ends of the bag, covered externally by sheets of covering material 26 similar to the fabric of the front and rear walls, and covered internally by lining fabric 27. The covering sheets 26 and lining fabric sheets 27 for the end panels 25 are slightly larger than the veneer panels 25 and extend beyond all peripheral portions thereof and are turned right angularly outwardly, as at 30, to be received within strips or welts 28 of U-shape in cross-section which follow the periphery of the end panels and which also receive projecting edge extensions of the external covering fabric and internal lining fabric of the front and rear walls 5 and 6, the bottom wall 7, and the top 10, said edge portions of all of the fabric sheets being secured together within the end welts 28, as disclosed in Fig. 3.

Due to the construction described, all of the edge portions of the inner and outer fabrics of the front and rear walls and top and bottom, as well as the projecting edges of the external and internal fabrics of the end panels are joined together and secured within the resilient welts 28 which externally surround the rigid ends of the luggage case. The reinforced ends of the case give rigidity and form to the assembled case notwithstanding the fact that its front and rear walls are flexible. Also, the projecting welts 28 serve as bumpers or cushions to absorb blows or strains which might be imposed on the ends of the luggage case when it is subjected to rough handling and the construction relieves the case walls from being damaged, deformed and strained.

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The improved soft-sided luggage case has all of the attributes of a soft-sided case without the disadvantages and the end reinforcements and the manner of securing the fabric edges within the cushioning welts 28 makes for a structure which can withstand severe handling.

The case utilizes but a minimum of external hardware and fixtures and through the means of the hookless fastener controlled front access flap 21, the case may be easily packed or unpacked and it does not require the space to be opened out as does the conventional hinged case.

The improved reinforced soft-sided luggage case is unique and attractive in appearance and is well adapted for the purposes described.

What is claimed as the invention is:

1. In a six sided hand luggage case wherein the covering for all of the walls is flexible sheet material and the sheet material for the end walls is interiorly reinforced by rigid panels, the end walls being set inwardly from the end edges of the flexible sheet material of the other walls, the end edges of the last mentioned walls being in the planes of their body portions, the edge portions of the sheet material of the end walls being turned right angularly against the co-planar with the projecting end edges of the sheet material of the other walls, resilient outwardly projecting welts, at right angles to the major extents of the end walls, applied to the peripheral portions of the end walls and having the projecting edges of the wall sheet material secured thereto.

2. In a six sided hand luggage case wherein the covering for all of the walls is flexible sheet material and the sheet material for the end walls is interiorly reinforced

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by rigid panels, the end walls being set inwardly from the end edges of the flexible sheet material of the other walls and at right angles thereto, the edge portions of the sheet material of the end walls projecting beyond the reinforcing panels being turned at right angles outwardly against and co-planar with the projecting end edges of the sheet material of the other walls, U-shaped resilient welts applied to the outer peripheral portions of the end walls and having the projecting edges of the sheet material of all of the walls secured therewithin.

3. In a hand luggage case, a one-piece fabric sheet in sling formation providing front, rear, and bottom walls, the bottom wall being reinforced, a rigid panel forming the top wall of the case and having the ends of the fabric sling secured to opposite side edges thereof, rigid panels closing the ends of the case, flexible fabric coverings for said panels and the top and bottom walls, and welts applied to exterior portions of the peripheries of the panels and having secured directly thereto extended edge portions of the fabric front and rear walls and the edge portions of the fabric and panel and top and bottom wall coverings, the flexible fabric front wall of the case having a flap controlled access opening therein.

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